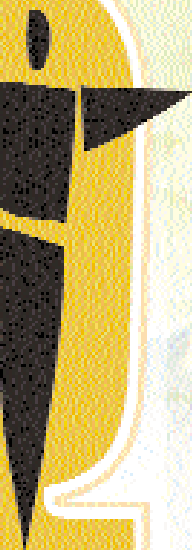


Quality Time

The Patriot's

Guide to Entertainment & Events

April 2009



In this issue:
MWR Events and Specials
Easter Egg Hunts
The Great MWR Yard Sale
Bamboo Farms (feature)
...and more

Consolidated Public Affairs Office

Senior Commander

Ft. Stewart-Hunter AAF

Maj.Gen. Tony Cucolo

Commander

U.S. Army Garrison, Ft. Stewart-Hunter AAF

Col. Todd A. Buchs

Commander

U.S. Army Garrison, Hunter Army Airfield

Lt. Col. Daniel Whitney

Public Affairs Officer

U.S. Army Garrison, Ft. Stewart-Hunter AAF

Richard Olson

Public Affairs Officer

U.S. Army Garrison, Hunter Army Airfield

Steve Hart

Quality Time Staff

Chief, Command Communications

Jim Jeffcoat

Managing Editor

Randy Murray

Production Manager

Sherron Walker

Contributor

Nancy Gould

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On the cover

Spring is blossoming all over. The warmer weather is a great excuse for you and your Family to get outside. Take the little ones to an Easter Egg Hunt or the whole Family to the Great MWR Yard Sale. See what else is happening in this issue of your Quality Time.



**If you have questions, comments
or story ideas, call the Q.T. Staff at:**

767-5669

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Commander's Letter



Spring is already in full bloom as we enter the month of April. Just look around and you'll see both pink and white dogwood blossoms and a variety of azaleas in bloom.

It's time to get out and work on that flower or vegetable garden. If you're looking for gardening ideas, this month offers lots of opportunities for the gardener or those who just like to enjoy the springtime outdoors.

Start out the month with a Family trip to Perry, Fla. and a **Bluegrass Festival**, April 2-4. But if you prefer something quieter, head up to Mistletree State Park near Appling, Ga. for a **Woodcarving Workshop**, April 4. The whole Family can enjoy the fresh air and the beauty of nature while you decorate your own hiking stick.

Easter falls in April this year, and you'll find several opportunities to observe the most important Christian holiday. Bring the little ones to a traditional **Easter Egg Hunt** at both Stewart and Hunter, April 11. There will be an **Easter Sunrise Service** at 6:30 a.m., April 12 at Marne Garden and outside Hunter Chapel. After morning services, be sure to visit Club Stewart or Hunter Club for a delicious **Easter Sunday Brunch**.

April 18 is a really big day at Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield and the tri-state area. If you have household items you no longer use and would like to sell, take part in **The Great MWR Yard Sale** at the Club Stewart and Hunter Credit Union parking lots and in Stewart-Hunter housing areas. If you prefer to just get away, then head over to General Coffee State Park near Nicholls, Ga. for a **Spring Fling**. Celebrate spring with nature activities and presentations on local plants and wildlife. You have yet another choice for your Family in Manning, S.C. with the **Clarendon County Striped Bass Festival**, April 18-26. This is not just a celebration of those huge hybrid bass for which the Santee Cooper Lakes are famous; it's also a chance for the community to show off its colorful array of flowers.

If you really like flowers, you won't want to miss the **Savannah Garden Exposition**, April 17-19. Get some new gardening ideas from the full-size exhibition gardens and demonstrations. While you're in the Savannah area for the exposition, stop by **Bamboo Farm and Coastal Garden** and see the many varieties of colorful blossoms, sugar cane, strawberries, blackberries and, of course, bamboo. Be sure to read about these wonderful gardens in this month's issue.

Each of us has our favorite flower but probably the most popular is the rose. Thomasville, Ga. celebrates the rose with its **88th annual Rose Show and Festival**, April 23. The Thomasville Rose Show was included in the Top 100 Events in North America in 2008 by the American Bus Association.

Weekend activities for the month of April conclude with the **Hilton Head Seafood Festival**, April 25. You and your Family can enjoy local seafood dishes from over a dozen Hilton Head Island restaurants. Sit down to a low country boil, a platter of fried shrimp or a bowl of chowder.

As you take the time to enjoy the warmer days of spring and participate in the many events and activities taking place in the local community and tri-state area, please be careful on the roads and on the water. Have fun and be safe.

"Rock of the Marne"



*Colonel Todd Buchs
Garrison Commander
Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield*

Come join us for
Easter Sunday Brunch

10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

April 12

at Club Stewart and Hunter Club

**Breakfast items • Ham Carving Station •
Grilled Lemon Chicken Breast • Leg of
Lamb w/mint jelly • Cabernet Rice Blend •
Prince Edward Island Blend vegetables •
Candied Yams • Chocolate Fountain**

...and other assorted desserts

The cost is \$14.95 per person.

Children ages 5 to 10 half price, 4 and under eat **FREE**.

Call 368-2212 or 450-7323 for more information.

Ongoing MWR Events

Monday thru Friday

"Toddler Time" at Cypress Sam's

Toddlers up to 5 years old are invited to play at Cypress Sam's Treehouse, building 449 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Monday through Friday, when there are no blowers or loud noises to scare them. Please remember, socks are required. The cost is \$1 per child playing. Call 767-4273 for more information.

Every Wednesday

Toddler Bowling Class

Bring the little ones to Cypress Sam's Treehouse, building 449 on Wednesday mornings from 10 to 11 a.m., unless it is a holiday or school vacation day, so they can learn the basics of bowling, toddler style. A \$1 cost includes all instructional fees and equipment. Call 767-9884 for more information.

Every Thursday

Roller Skating Class 101

Always wanted to learn how to roller skate? Anyone can learn to skate and we'll show you how at Corkan Family Fun Center, building 449 from 6 to 8 p.m., every Thursday. So come out and learn all the basics. The cost is \$5 per session and includes all instructional fees and equipment. Call 767-9884 for more information.

Climbing Class

The staff at Corkan Family Fun Center, building 449 can teach anyone to climb from 6 to 8 p.m., every Thursday. The cost is \$7 per session, including all instructional fees and equipment. Climbing students must be at least 8 years old. If under 18, parent or guardian must be present. Call 767-9884 for more information.

Community Highlights

for April

No Fooling: Play Golf for \$1 a Hole

April 1

Golfers will have the opportunity to play at Taylors Creek Golf Course and Hunter Golf Club courses for just \$1 a hole, including greens fee and golf cart fee. No reservation needed, but come early. Call 767-2370 at Stewart or 315-9115 at Hunter for more information.

Come to the RC Raceway

April 4

Cypress Creek Adventure Golf, building 448, will be transformed into the "Tour De Cypress Creek Race" to host the Radio Controlled Raceway for remote control cars from 7 to 10 p.m., April 4. Call 767-9884 for information.

Enjoy a Toddler Easter Egg Hunt

April 10

Join us at Cypress Creek Adventure Golf, building 448 for the annual Toddler Easter Egg Hunt from 9 to 11:30 a.m., April 10, weather permitting. There is no charge.

Come out and meet the Easter Bunny and find the eggs he has hidden especially for our toddlers up to 5 years old. Sorry, big brother or sister. This event gives the little ones something special to do. Call 767-9884 for more information.

Sign Up for GC Golf Scramble

April 10

A golf scramble kicking off the Hunter Garrison Commander's Tournament season will be held April 10 at Hunter Golf Club. Play begins at 8 a.m. with a shotgun start. Entry fee is \$35 for Soldiers, Family Members, retirees, DoD Civilians, and Taylors Creek Golf Course and Hunter Golf Club members, and \$40 for civilian guests. Fee includes tournament fee, golf car, driving range, and tournament prizes.

The first 25 foursomes will be accepted. Call 315-9115 for additional information and registration by April 8.



Enjoy Easter Egg Hunts at Stewart, Hunter April 11

There will be play areas featuring inflatables, face painting and Easter Bunny photo ops, but the main attraction at Stewart and Hunter locations, April 11 will be the traditional Easter Egg Hunt.



The event is presented by Child, Youth and School Services and MWR. It will be held at the Youth Sports Fields across the street from Diamond Elementary School, behind School Age Services, building 6571 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Stewart, and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Child Development Center, building 1284 and Youth Center Yards, building 1289 on Hunter. There is no charge.

Age groups are 1 to 2, 3 to 4, 5 to 7 and 8 to 10. Parents are asked to arrive about 20 minutes early, so they can be placed for the egg hunt, which begins at 10 a.m. and will last about 20 minutes.

There will be a Bunny Photo Station, where parents have the option of taking their own photos or paying for a professional photo. Call 767-4491 at Stewart or 315-5708 at Hunter for more information.

Come to Easter Brunch at the Clubs April 12



Bring the whole Family and celebrate Easter Sunday with a fabulous brunch. Join us from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on April 12 at Club Stewart, building 405, and at Hunter Club, building 6015.

The menu features *breakfast items, ham carving station, grilled lemon chicken breast, leg of lamb with mint jelly, cabernet rice blend, candied yams, Prince Edward Island blend vegetables, roast potatoes, corn souffle, apple crepes, chocolate fountain and*

other assorted desserts.

The cost is \$14.95 per person, children ages 5 to 10 half price, and children 4 and under eat FREE.

Kids Cooking Class follows brunch from 3 to 5 p.m. The cost is \$5 per child age 5 to 12. Space is limited, so reservations are required. Call 368-2212 or 459-7923 for more information.

Ongoing MWR Events

Every Thursday

Beginner Roller Hockey

Come out to Corkan Family Fun Center, building 449 to learn the game of Roller Hockey or show us your skill from 8 to 10 p.m., every Thursday. The \$5 cost includes all instructional fees and equipment. Call 767-9884 for more information.

Mini Golf (Kids' Style)

Learn the basics of adventure mini-golf at Cypress Creek Adventure Golf, building 448 from 3 to 5 p.m., every Monday for kids ages 5 to 9. The cost is \$2 per session and includes all instructional fees and equipment. Call 767-6708 or 767-9884 for more information.

Every Saturday

"Teen Nite" at Corkan

Corkan Family Fun Center, building 449 is the place to be for teens ages 13 to 18 on Saturdays



from 8 to 11 p.m. Just pay \$5 to skate or \$5 per game for laser tag. Remember to ask your mom and dad. Call 767-9884 for more information.

Every Sunday

Teen Wii Challenge at Corkan

The staff at Corkan Teen Recreation Center, building 438 will challenge teens against teens in Wii game competition from 3 to 8 p.m., every Sunday. There's no charge, and the daily winner will win two free games at any Corkan facility. Call 767-3781 for more information.

Continued on Page 8

*Continued from Page 7***Plan for Great MWR Yard Sale April 8**

Here's an opportunity to sell household goods you are ready to part with. The sale will be held from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., April 18 at Club Stewart, building 405, parking lot and Hunter Credit Union, building 1282, parking lot, adjacent to the Child Development Center, and in Stewart and Hunter housing areas.

Post housing residents can sell for free but need to pre-register by April 14, so their street address can be highlighted on a map that will be handed out to interested shoppers. Vendors, Soldiers, Family Members, retirees, and DoD Civilians interested in selling at Club Stewart or Hunter Credit Union parking lots can call and register at 767-8238 or 315-2019. Cost for vendors is \$5 per space.

Weapons, food items, or retail items like Avon, Tupperware, etc. cannot be sold.

Goodwill Industries will be on hand to receive donations from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Club Stewart and Hunter Credit Union parking lots from housing areas or anyone wishing to donate items.

Take Part in Cycle-Rama April 25

Get your bike checked and enjoy a free group ride in the Cycle-Rama, 11 a.m., April 25 at Tominac Fitness Center, building 919. An obstacle course will be set up for the children.

Free bicycle safety checks will be provided from 11 a.m. to noon by the Savannah Bicycle Link, who also will have equipment and gear on display.

At noon, a group bicycle ride will leave the fitness center and transit to North Perimeter Rd. Bikers then ride as much or as little as they desire around Hunter via Perimeter Rd. All DoD ID cardholders and their guests are invited to participate.



Ongoing MWR Events

Get Fit at Jordan Youth Gym

This is an ongoing event from 2 to 8 p.m. daily at Jordan Youth Gym, building 608 that challenges youth ages 6 to 18 to commit to living a healthy lifestyle by joining the Dynamic Fitness Health and Fitness Program. Call 767-1428 for more information.

Register for Youth Sports Baseball/T-Ball

Youth Sports at Stewart is registering for Baseball/T-ball during April. T-ball is open to Child, Youth and School Services members ages 4 to 6 as of May 1 and baseball is open to CYSS members ages 7 to 14 as of Aug 1. Register at CYSS, building 443 on Gulick Avenue., from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesdays. Call 767-2312 for more information on registration procedures. Call 767-4371 for information on the Baseball/T-ball.

Garden Plots Available

Garden plots on Ga. Hwy. 144 near the horse stables are available for rent from the Pass & Permit Office, building 8093 to active duty and

retired military. The cost is \$20 for a 20-foot-by-20-foot lot. The Spring season runs from February to June, Fall from August to December. Call 435-8033 for more information.

Travel Opportunities Available

The Leisure Travel Office has several opportunities for you. Here's a look at what is available:

- The registration deadline is April 1 for the **Disney Orlando Spring Break Trip**, scheduled April 10-12 in Kissimmee, Fla. The \$275 cost for up to four people per hotel room, includes bus transportation. Call 767-2841 for details.

- Join us for a day trip to Atlanta, April 4 to see the **Atlanta Hawks clash with the Orlando Magic** in basketball. Tipoff is 7 p.m. Spend the afternoon in the Atlanta metro area and end it with the game. Cost is \$55 per person, including a game ticket and Chick-fil-A meal voucher. Call 767-2841/8609 for more information.

- Leisure Travel is planning a **"Destination Unknown" trip** from 8 p.m. to midnight, April 15. The \$35 cost includes transportation and admission. Call 767-2841/8609 for more information.



Ongoing MWR Events

Try the Corkan's Elite Laser Quest

Are you the best in laser tag? Compete in the Corkan Family Fun Center's Elite Laser Quest. All this month, we will print and record all scores and award the high scores with two free games at any Corkan Family Recreation facility. Cost is \$5 per person per game to participate.

There are three age categories, 5 to 12, 13 to 18, and 18 and over, plus two team categories, Families and active duty Soldiers. Each team may have four or more members. Call 767-9884 for more information.

Check Out Our Craft Classes for Kids

Craft Classes for the Kids are offered on various dates and times at Cypress Sam's Treehouse, building 449. The Treehouse is the place to be for kids up to 12 years old. Regular admission prices apply. Come by and pick up a calendar of the fun things like kids' crafts, kids' games, etc. that are planned for the month. Call 767-9884 for more information.

Visit Corkan Teen Recreation Center

Teens, have you been to the Corkan Teen Recreation Center, building 438? If not, you're missing out on all the fun the center has to offer – Wii Challenge, parties and dancing – to entertain teens. Come by the center and pick up a calendar of activities planned for the month. Call 767-3781 for more information.

Area April Happenings



*See map on page 15
for event location

April 2-4

Visit Florida State Bluegrass Festival

Perry, Fla. – Sit back and enjoy some of the finest Bluegrass music in the country, featuring Rhonda Vincent, Mountain Heart and many more. There will be free workshops for ticket holders, arts and crafts, food vendors and a chili cook-off. The \$15 per person tickets are good for the entire weekend. Call 850-584-5366 for more information.

Directions: Take I-95 south toward Jacksonville, Fla., taking I-295 around to I-10 west. Take I-10 to exit 241 then take U.S. 221 south to Perry. **#1 on Map***

office then carve a decorative head to a one-of-a-kind hiking stick. Register in advance. Workshop cost is \$10, parking \$3. For more information or to register, call 706-541-0321. **Directions:** Take GA 119 north through Pembroke then to I-16. Take I-16 west about 42 miles to U.S. 1. Turn right and go north on U.S. 1 about 60 miles. At the town of Wrens, take U.S. 221 about 25 miles to Appling. Mistletoe State Park is about three miles off GA 150. **#2 on Map***

April 4

Sign up for Wood Carving Workshop



Appling, Ga. – Come on over to Mistletoe State Park for a special wood carving workshop, 10 a.m. to noon. Just bring your own pocket knife with both long and short blades. You can also bring your own walking cane or purchase one at the park

April 17-19

Come to Savannah Garden Exposition

Savannah, Ga. - Celebrate Savannah's unique heritage and garden history at the 9th annual Savannah Garden Exposition. The Expo begins Friday and runs through Sunday. Full-size exhibition gardens, informative demonstrations, children's activities, and an open-air market with growers and garden-related merchandise are a few of the featured events. Admission is \$10. Call 912-235-4795 for more information. **Directions:** Take I-95 north to I-16 then go east on I-16 to W. Broad/ Martin Luther King Blvd. Museum is located on Martin Luther King Blvd. and Oglethorpe, near Visitor's Center. **#3 on Map***

The Great MWR Yard Sale

8 a.m. to 2 p.m., April 18

**Club Stewart, Hunter Credit
Union parking lots and
Stewart-Hunter housing areas**

**Call 767-8238
or 315-2019
to register by April 14.**

Household items only. No retail items, food or weapons.

April Community Calendar



2 - 4 **Come down to the Florida State Bluegrass Festival**
Perry, Fla. – Sit back and enjoy some of the finest Bluegrass music in the country, featuring Rhonda Vincent, Mountain Heart and many more. There will be free workshops for ticket holders, arts and crafts, food vendors and a chili cook-off. The \$15 per person tickets are good for the entire weekend. Call 850-584-5366 for more information. **Directions:** Take I-95 south toward Jacksonville, Fla., taking I-295 around to I-10 west. Take I-10 to exit 241 then take U.S. 221 south to Perry.



4 **Participate in a Wood Carving Workshop**
Appling, Ga. – Come on over to Mistletoe State Park for a special wood carving workshop, 10 a.m. to noon. Just bring your own pocket knife and walking cane or purchase one at the park office then carve a decorative hiking stick. Register in advance. Workshop is \$10, parking \$3. For more information, call 706-541-0321. **Directions:** Take GA 119 north through Pembroke then to I-16. Take I-16 west about 42 miles to U.S. 1. Turn right and go north on U.S. 1 about 60 miles. At the town of Wrens, take U.S. 221 about 25 miles to Appling. Mistletoe State Park is three miles off GA 150.

11 **Celebrate Easter with a traditional Easter Egg Hunt**
Bring the little ones to enjoy inflatables, face painting and Easter Bunny photo ops, but especially Stewart and Hunter's traditional Easter Egg Hunt, April 11. It will be held at the Youth Sports Fields across the street from Diamond Elementary School 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Stewart, and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Child Development Center, building 1284 and Youth Center Yards, building 1289 on Hunter. There is no charge. Age groups are 1 to 2, 3 to 4, 5 to 7 and 8 to 10. Call 767-4491 at Stewart or 315-5708 at Hunter for more information.



12 **Enjoy an Easter Sunday Brunch**
Bring the whole Family and celebrate Easter Sunday with a fabulous brunch. Join us from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on April 12 at Club Stewart, building 405, and at Hunter Club, building 6015. The menu features *breakfast items, ham carving station, grilled lemon chicken breast, leg of lamb with mint jelly, cabernet rice blend, candied yams, Prince Edward Island blend vegetables, roast potatoes, corn souffle, apple crepes, chocolate fountain and other assorted desserts.* Cost is \$14.95 per person with children 5 to 10 half price, under 4 eat FREE.

17 - 19 **Visit the Savannah Garden Exposition**
Savannah, Ga. - Celebrate Savannah's unique heritage and garden history at the 9th Annual Savannah Garden Exposition. The Expo begins Friday, April 17 and runs through Sunday, April 19. Full-size exhibition gardens, informative demonstrations, children's activities, and an open-air market with growers and garden-related merchandise are a few of the featured events. Admission is \$10. Call 912-235-4795 for more information. **Directions:** Take I-16 to W. Broad/Martin Luther King Boulevard Museum is located on Martin Luther King, and Oglethorpe, near Visitor's Center.



18 **Take a Spring Fling**
Nicholls, Ga. – Celebrate spring with nature activities and presentations on plants and animals found in General Coffee State Park and the surrounding area. Hands-on activities for kids will include take-home projects. Admission is free; parking is \$3. Call 912-384-1581 for more information. **Directions:** Take U.S. 84 south of Jesup, Ga. to GA 203. Turn west on GA 203 to the town of New Lacy then take GA 32 to Nicholls. Look for signs directing you to General Coffee State Park.

18 - 26 **Come to the Striped Bass Festival**
Manning, S.C. – Celebrate Spring and the striped bass that put the Santee Cooper Lakes on the fishing maps of the world. April in Clarendon County is filled with the beauty of Spring – azaleas, wisteria, irises, tulips, geraniums, roses, gladiolas and more are in full bloom. The Striped Bass Festival complements the natural beauty of our area with fireworks, dances, a parade, boating events and other activities. Free admission. **Directions:** Take I-95 north to the town of Manning, turning east on Paxville Highway at exit 119. Look for signs to the festival.



23 **See the Thomasville Rose Show and Festival**
Thomasville, Ga. – Join the fun at the 88th Annual Rose Show and Festival held in historic downtown Thomasville. Enjoy roses, roses, and more roses, plus parades, live music, fantastic food, exciting sporting events, arts and crafts and everything from an elegant plantation ball to a Family-oriented street dance. Call 229-227-7020 for more information or visit www.downtownthomasville.com. Free admission. **Directions:** Take U.S. 84 south all the way to Thomasville. Look for signs directing you to Rose Show and Festival activities.

25 **Hilton Head Seafood Fest**
Hilton, S.C. – Enjoy some of Hilton Head Island's best seafood from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Shelter Cove Community Park where 12 island restaurants will be serving their seafood specialties. Six local chefs will compete in an Iron Chef competi-

tion, and there will be live entertainment by The Headliners, Gemini Junction and Chris Jones. Free admission. Call 803-422-6331 for more information. **Directions:** Take I-95 north beyond Hardeeville, S.C. to exit 8 then take U.S. 278 east to Hilton Head Island. Look for signs directing you to Seafood Fest.



May Highlights

May 2
Kids Fishing Derby
Nicholls, Ga. - Kids 15 and younger with a parent can win prizes in our big fish, most fish and casting skill competitions. Parking is \$3. Call 394-7082 for more information.

May 16-17
Blues over Beaufort
Beaufort, S.C. - The Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort will host the 2009 air show, featuring the Navy's Blue Angels. Go to www.beaufortairshow.com for more information.

Easter Egg Hunt

10 a.m. • April 11

Stewart's Youth Sports Fields
Hunter's Youth Center Yards

FREE

to age groups
1-2, 3-4, 5-7 and
8-10.

**Call 767-4491 at Stewart
or 315-5708 at Hunter.**



Continued from Page 10

April 18

Take a Spring Fling

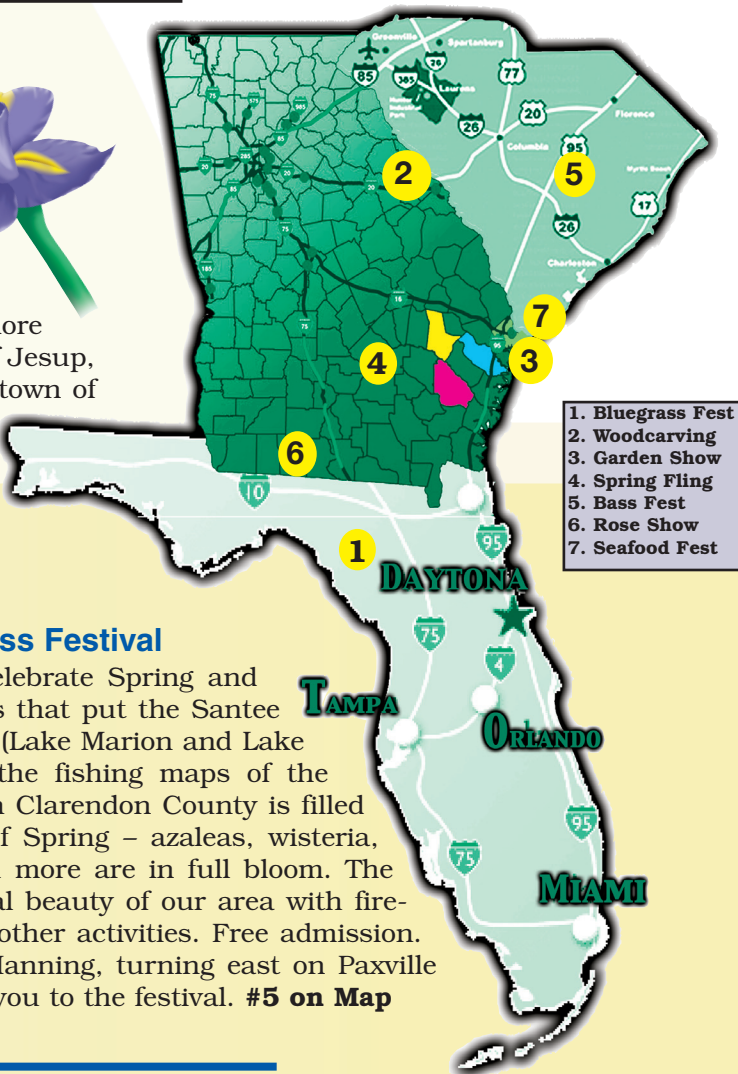
Nicholls, Ga. – Celebrate spring with nature activities and presentations on plants and animals found in General Coffee State Park and the surrounding area. Hands-on activities for kids will include take-home projects. Admission is free; parking is \$3. Call 912-384-1581 for more information. **Directions:** Take U.S. 84 south of Jesup, Ga. to GA 203. Turn west on GA 203 to the town of New Lacy then take GA 32 to Nicholls. Look for signs directing you to General Coffee State Park. **#4 on Map**



April 18 – 26

Come to Clarendon County's Striped Bass Festival

Manning, S.C. – Celebrate Spring and the striped bass that put the Santee Cooper Lakes (Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie) on the fishing maps of the world. April in Clarendon County is filled with the beauty of Spring – azaleas, wisteria, irises, tulips, geraniums, roses, gladiolas and more are in full bloom. The Striped Bass Festival complements the natural beauty of our area with fireworks, dances, a parade, boating events and other activities. Free admission. **Directions:** Take I-95 north to the town of Manning, turning east on Paxville Highway at exit 119. Look for signs directing you to the festival. **#5 on Map**



1. Bluegrass Fest
2. Woodcarving
3. Garden Show
4. Spring Fling
5. Bass Fest
6. Rose Show
7. Seafood Fest

April 23

Visit Thomasville Rose Show and Festival

Thomasville, Ga. – Join the fun at the 88th Annual Rose Show and Festival held in historic downtown Thomasville. Enjoy roses, roses, and more roses, plus parades, live music, fantastic food, exciting sporting events, arts and crafts and everything from an elegant plantation ball to a Family-oriented street dance. Call 229-227-7020 for more information or visit www.downtownthomasville.com. Free admission. **Directions:** Take U.S. 84 south all the way to Thomasville. Look for signs directing you to Rose Show and Festival activities. **#6 on Map**

April 25

Come to Hilton Head Seafood Fest

Hilton, S.C. – Enjoy some of Hilton Head Island's best seafood from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at

Shelter Cove Community Park where 12 island restaurants will be serving their seafood specialties. Six local chefs will compete in an Iron Chef competition, and there will be live entertainment by The Headliners, Gemini Junction and Chris Jones. Free admission. Call 803-422-6331 for more information. **Directions:** Take I-95 north beyond Hardeeville, S.C. to exit 8 then take U.S. 278 east to Hilton Head Island. Look for signs directing you to Seafood Fest. **#7 on Map**



Fascinating Sites & Fruitful Experiences



Bamboo Farm & Coastal Gardens

By **Connie Benson**

Plants were gathered by explorers from all parts of the world for more than 60 years, then they were planted and evaluated for research to determine growth and potential use in sandy soil and humid climate of Coastal Georgia. That 1919 research took place just 20 miles from Fort Stewart where some visitors describe as “an oasis in the Sahara,” **Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens.**

Today, the facility that began with only three clumps of giant timber obtained from a rice plantation located on the Ogeechee River is part of the University of Georgia College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Cooperative Extension, covering 55 acres that houses internationally known collections of oriental bamboo and many rare plants and trees.

BFCG is located just off U.S. 17 that runs

from Richmond Hill to Savannah. You can't miss it. You'll be greeted by the large bamboo plants as you approach the sign on your left at 2 Canebroke Rd. If you're traveling on I-95 north to Savannah, take a right at exit 204. Go about two miles, then take another right on Coastal Highway 17. Look for the sign on your right about a half mile past Walmart.

The facility provides education, public outreach and applied research in horticulture and environmental sciences. But you don't have to be an educator or researcher to see the 160 varieties of bamboo plants, nor do you have to have a public outreach agenda. You can just be a spectator. Admission is free. And in addition to jungle-like bamboo groves, you'll witness many one-of-a-kind plant specimens in North America.

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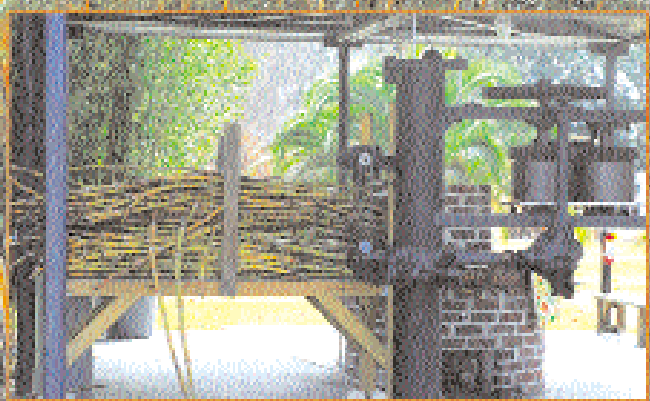
The plant collections include bamboo, of course, and irises, roses – any color, magnolias, crape myrtles, loropetalum, holly, daylilies, ornamental grasses and camellias. In fact, in February when I visited, I saw beautiful camellias in bloom. The breath-taking site is one of the world's largest collection of camellia species grown in one place, seconded only by China.

The holly trees got two thumbs up in my book. They were grown from seeds sent from China to the Savannah U.S. Department of Agriculture Station back in 1938. These trees had clusters of small, bright red berries that almost covered each tree.

Speaking of berries, you can schedule a Pick-Your-Own Black or Strawberry Expedition. BFCG will provide the basket. Pick all you want. Weigh and pay later. Food can't get more local than this. The time is ripe too, *right* that is, for strawberry lovers.

The Roots and Shoots Program, which promotes the activity, got underway in March and runs through May 7. It allows educators of students in grades K-5 to schedule field trips, which complements the Georgia Performance Standards for Science. The students are given an educational briefing in one of their 60-seat classroom facilities, and then they're led on a walking tour. First they learn, then they earn a little satisfaction for that sweet tooth.

May through June, make it a Family event as you pick-your-own blackberries. The variety is "Kiowa," a thorny-type blackberry that produces very large, flavorful berries. No pesticides are used.



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"Many children come to the weigh station with more berries on their faces than in their baskets. We don't mind, although it's not recommended," Jeffrey Webb, area extension agent, said smiling.

Strawberries sell at \$2 per pound; blackberries are \$3 per pound. Call the hotline for picking conditions at 912-921-5897.

Still got your attention, berry lovers? Well, grab your napkin and get ready for some mouth watering strawberry short cake at the Sunday Supper in the Strawberry Patch, April 27. This country supper also includes some good ole down, home southern cooking and a silent auction. The entry fee for this fundraiser is \$15 per person.

If you can't make this event, plan your own. BFCG's gardens make a great place for a spring or summer wedding ceremony. Rental facilities are available for receptions, group activities, Family reunions or conferences. Call 912-921-5460 for more information, or go to www.ugaextension.com/bamboo.

One garden, in particular that got my attention was the Pollinators Garden, sometimes called the Butterfly Garden. This area was constructed by volunteers. It demonstrates

the fascinating and varied process of pollination. Bring your camera and capture bees, wasps, butterflies and moths, both insects and mammals in action.

Other gardens include perennials, annuals, and a resourceful Xeriscape Water Wise Garden, which demonstrates a variety of ways to save water and recycle resources in the landscape without sacrificing quality and beauty of the environment.

After a walk through the gardens, take a break at a nearby covered picnic area for lunch or sit by one of the many lakes on site and feel

a cool breeze that just may put you right to sleep but not if you remembered to bring your fishing rod along. Sit back and reel in a few, as eight or more people are permitted to fish at the facility. It's catch and release fishing only for just \$5 per person. Call to schedule a week in advance.

Now if you're planning a fall tour, explore the banana grove, where bunches of bananas can be seen ripening among the large leaves. And see an old fashioned sugar cane grinder at work preparing syrup, just the right texture for pouring over grandma's biscuits.





Volunteers will lead you through all types of vegetable gardens as well as teach you about food and the environment. Pick up a pumpkin or two while you're there. They sell for \$2 each. This program runs from September through November and is suitable for all ages.

If you're past school age and think you've got a green thumb, join the Master Gardeners who receive more than 40 hours of classroom and hands-on instruction in horticulture and related fields. Classes are taught by university specialists, local horticulturists and veteran master gardeners. A small registration fee covers instruction and training manual.

There you have it. Entertainment and recreational areas for Family and friends, educational material for students young and old, and spectacular sites for enthusiastic, fruit-eating spectators, all in one place, Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens. Have a berry wonderful experience!

Spiritual Fitness

“The Soldier’s heart, the Soldier’s spirit, and the Soldier’s soul are everything. Unless the Soldier’s soul sustains him, he cannot be relied on and will fail himself, his commander, his country in the end.”

General George C. Marshall

Faith Group Awareness

FGAP is an educational series devoted to increasing understanding and tolerance among faith groups. Each quarter a distinctive faith group is showcased. FGAP is open to all Soldiers, their Families and Army Civilians. POC is Mike Iliff 767-9789.

Operation Helping Hand

OHH is the Commander’s ongoing emergency food assistance program for Soldiers and their Families. The program is managed and funded by the installation chaplain.

Soldiers and Family Members needing to use this program should contact their unit chaplain.

Chapel Schedule

Fort Stewart

Catholic	Location	Time
Saturday Vigil Mass	Main Post Chapel	5 p.m.
Sunday Mass.	Main Post Chapel	9 a.m.

Protestant		
Contemporary Worship	Marne	11 a.m.
Gospel Worship	Main Post Chapel	11 a.m.
Traditional Worship	Marne	9 a.m.
Liturgical Worship	Heritage	11 a.m.
Kids’ Church(K to 6th grade).....	Across from Dia. Elem.....	11 a.m.
PWOC (Wednesday)	Main Post Chapel.....	9:30 a.m.

Islamic		
Friday Jum’ah	Marne	1:30 p.m.
Contact Spc. Lugman at wallend.lugman@us.army.mil		

Jewish		
Friday	Heritage	11:30 a.m.
Contact Sgt. 1st Class. Crowther at harold.crowther@amed.army.mil		

Hunter Army Airfield

Catholic		
Sunday Mass.	Chapel.....	11 a.m.

Protestant		
Sunday Service.....	Chapel.....	9 a.m.

Religious Education Contacts
 Stewart and Hunter, Director of RE, Mike Iliff, call 767-9789.
 Stewart Catholic RE coordinator, Beth Novak, call 767-6825.
 Hunter Catholic RE coordinator, Pamela Perez, call 315-5440.

Easter Sunrise Services

6:30 a.m., April 12
 Marne Garden and
 outside Hunter Chapel

*Call 435-9918 or 315-5111
 for more information.*



For all kids, grades K-5

Our children are the Church of the future. Our Kids Church Team demonstrates the Gospel of Christ through puppets, dramatic skits, hands-on experiments, crafts and Biblical teachings.

Kids Church is held each Sunday, 10:45 a.m. at School Age Services (across from Diamond Elementary school) at Stewart, and 9 a.m. at Hunter Chapel’s Fellowship Hall.



Youth Ministry

Sunday night (6:30 to 8 p.m.) at Bryan Village

Youth Center is a night of energy, excitement and fun. Our Youth Ministry revolves around prayer, praise, and a message addressing contemporary youth topics. Call Jerry Thompson at 247-2626.